

Message Text

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15

ACTION ARA-20

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FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9058

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE GEORGETOWN 1675

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, GY

SUBJECT: GUYANA PRIME MINISTER ANNOUNCES FURTHER DETAILS OF
NATIONAL SERVICE PLAN

REF: GEORGETOWN 1573

1. AT NOVEMBER 4 SESSION OF SPECIAL CONGRESS OF RULING
PEOPLE'S NATIONAL CONGRESS(PNC), PRIME MINISTER FORBES
BURNHAM ANNOUNCED FURTHER DETAILS OF RECENTLY PROPOSED
NATIONAL SERVICE PLAN(REFTEL). ACCORDING TO REPORT IN GOVT
OWNED DAILY CHRONICLE, CONFIRMED TO EMBOFF AS ACCUATE BY
PNC MEMBER IN ATTENDANCE, BURNHAM TOLD DELGATES NATIONAL
SERVICE WILL CONSIST OF SIX CATEGORIES.

A. VOLUNTARY YOUTH BRIGAGE--FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN
AGES EIGHT TO FOURTEEN.

B. NATIONAL CADET CORPS--FOR YOUTHS AGES FOURTEEN TO
EIGHTEEN.

C. YOUNG WORKERS CORPS--FOR YOUTHS WHO DO NOT ATTEND
SECONDARY SCHOOL.

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D. NATIONAL PIONEER CORPS--FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL GRADUATES,

INCLUDING THOSE ENTERING CIVIL SERVICE OR UNIVERSITY
OF GUYANA, AND UNEMPLOYED.

E. REHABILITATION CORPS--FOR HANDICAPPED YOUTHS OR THOSE IN
REFORM SCHOOL.

F. SPECIAL SERVICE CORPS--FOR THOSE WITH SPECIAL SKILLS
(IE. DOCTORS).

2. BURNHAM OFFERED NO PRECISE TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
OF PLAN. HE DID STATE, HOWEVER, NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINING
WOULD BEGIN WITH MINISTERS. PM QUOTED AS REMARKING MINISTERS
"MUST GET OUT INTO THE FIELDS WITH THE PEOPLE." EACH MINISTER
WILL BE REQUIRED TO SPEND ONE MONTH EVERY YEAR "IN THE FIELD."

3. BURNHAM ALSO ADDRESSED HIMSELF TO OPPOSITION CRITICISM
OF NATIONAL SERVICE. ACCORDING TO PM, NATIONAL SERVICE
IS NOT "ATTEMPT TO PUT NATION IN STRAIGHT JACKET." IT IS,
INSTEAD, EFFORT TO MOBILIZE AND TRAIN FOR BUILDING OF GUYANA.

4. COMMENT: BURNHAM'S DISCLOSURE OF FURTHER DETAILS OF
NATIONAL SERVICE PLAN STILL LEAVES IMPORTANT ORGANIZATIONAL
AND POLITICAL QUESTIONS UNANSWERED. IT IS NOT CLEAR HOW PNC
GOVT, NOT PARTICULARLY NOTED FOR ITS ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS,
WILL MOVE NATIONAL SERVICE FROM PLANNING TO PERFORMANCE
STAGE. AS TOO OFTEN CASE HERE, PLANNING STARTS WITHOUT
ADEQUATE CONSIDERATION OF RESOURCES AVAILABLE AND REALITIES
OF SITUATION. PRESENT GOVT CAPABILITIES WOULD SUGGEST MODEST
BEGINNING FOR NATIONAL SERVICE IS ALL THAT CAN BE REALISTICALLY
EXPECTED. FURTHER, BURNHAM'S REASSURANCES THAT NATIONAL SERVICE
WILL NOT BE USED FOR PARTY INDOCTRINATION ARE NOT LIKELY TO
CONVINCE OPPOSITION WHICH HAS SEEN PNC USE GOVERNMENT AND
ARMY FOR PARTY PURPOSES. KING

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